

City Living Heats Up Boston

Boston is part of a national trend of cities experiencing a renewed interest in city living. The city's population is soon expected to exceed 600,000 citizens for the first time since 1970. Not all of Boston's residents and businesses, however, have benefited from the expansion. Increased development and the influx of wealthy residents into older neighborhoods have left smaller established businesses and lower-income residents out in the cold.

Invest in the Forgotten Sector

Enter the Rebuild Boston Energy Initiative (Rebuild Boston). This partnership of organizations, led by the Northeast Energy Efficiency Council (NEEC), has a mission to stimulate investments in energy and water conservation improvements to existing buildings.

The partnership focuses its attention on energy-efficiency as a viable economic development tool and encourages renovations that will increase profits, lower utility costs and improve the environment. Rebuild Boston's goal is to accelerate energy-efficiency investments in hard-to-reach market sectors, such as lower-income housing and small businesses.

Using initiatives such as ENERGY STAR® and performance contracts, the partnership is working to upgrade public housing, increase the availability of affordable housing, improve living conditions for senior citizens and the homeless, improve city buildings and ensure small businesses stay competitive in the new economy.

Established in 1996, this partnership has already invested \$30 million in 13 million square feet of improved space, producing annual savings of 250,000 MMBTU. The primary sources of investment include energy service financing, utility energy-efficiency incentives and housing agency financing.



City government is one of the largest building owners in Boston. Rebuild Boston initiated a system between city-run upgrade programs and utility companies that automatically considers energy-efficiency improvements for every upgrade project undertaken by Boston.

Public Housing

Like other big city housing authorities, the Boston Housing Authority (BHA) properties have had long-standing water and energy inefficiencies. Rebuild Boston has provided technical assessments and developed a performance contracting system with BHA to install cost-effective measures for improving existing buildings. Two performance contracts with a total cost of \$17 million have been signed and are

PARTNERSHIP FACTS

- **Targeted Buildings:**
Boston Housing Authority Apartments, Homeless Shelter, Small Businesses, City Government
- **Square Footage:**
200,000 square feet
- **Anticipated Savings:**
\$250,000 MMBTU annually
- **Notable Innovations:**
Utility Partners—Boston Gas and Boston Edison—committed over \$1.5 million per year for ENERGY STAR new construction.



Rebuild America

projected to save \$2 million annually in energy and water costs.

Rebuild Boston is also working with two multi-family assisted housing developments and the city's Department of Neighborhood Development to implement energy-efficiency measures in affordable new housing. Over 2,500 new homes are planned for development. Rebuild Boston is providing technical and financial resources to ensure that these homes meet ENERGY STAR standards for energy-efficiency. Rebuild Boston projects currently account for over 70 percent of Massachusetts ENERGY STAR qualified new construction.

Improved Living Conditions

Rebuild Boston has served both senior citizens and the homeless through energy-efficiency improvements that lower utility costs, establish consistent apartment temperatures and create safer living conditions. Rebuild Boston supported energy and water efficiency upgrades totaling \$353,300 throughout the Morville House, an elderly housing complex. These investments improved the residents' thermal comfort, air quality and fire safety, plus reduced electric bills by 25 percent. The partnership also facilitated the installation of \$160,000 in new lighting throughout the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Long Island Campus, a shelter for the homeless. This upgrade was completed by Boston Edison, who estimates the savings of about \$70,000 per year—roughly the equivalent of three months of free electricity.

Rebuild Boston has also found that poor health is a major problem in city housing. The partnership has begun to investigate how upgrading ventila-

tion systems for energy-efficiency can improve indoor air quality and lower asthma rates. The partnership is working with local health service providers to make Boston's housing healthier through energy-efficiency upgrades and related health outreach services.

Competitive Edge

Rebuild Boston is leveraging energy efficiency as a tool for small businesses to receive utility investments. Rebuild Boston utility partners—Boston Gas and Boston Edison—developed new resources for energy-efficiency improvements for small commercial and industrial customers. Investments totaled over \$750,000 in 80 Rebuild Boston projects in 1999 alone.

Boston City Hall

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The partnership plans to continue to stimulate the city's economy through energy efficiency improvements and to undertake additional projects to help make Boston's future brighter and stronger.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE REBUILD BOSTON, CONTACT:

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